



Homosexuality and American Psychiatry: The Politics of Diagnosis

By *Ronald Bayer*

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In 1973, after several years of bitter dispute, the Board of Trustees of the American Psychiatric Association decided to remove homosexuality from its official list of mental diseases. Infuriated by the Board's action, a substantial number of dissident psychiatrists charged the association's leadership with capitulating to the pressures of Gay Liberation groups, and forced the board to submit its decision to a referendum of the full APA membership. Ronald Bayer presents a political analysis of the psychiatric battle involved, from the first confrontations organized by gay demonstrators at psychiatric conventions to the referendum initiated by orthodox psychiatrists. The result is a fascinating view of the individuals who led the debate and the fundamental questions that engaged them: social and cultural values, the definition of disease, and the nature of sexuality. Available for the first time in paperback, the book includes a new afterword by the author.

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Review

"Bayer's job in his tight, extraordinary packed bullet of a book is a particular one: to tell us what was at stake when the A.P.A. erased homosexuality from its list of mental diseases in 1973.... Bayer's book takes us behind the scenes of this uneasy linguistic victory in a way we have never been taken before."--*The Nation*

"Ronald Bayer has now written a lucid, succinct, and eminently fair-minded account of the controversy, which resulted in the removal of homosexuality from the Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Psychiatric Disorders."--**Paul Robinson**,*The New Republic*

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